

NIAGARA FALLS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Safety Training Presentation
August, 2021

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FROM SUPERINTENDENT MARK LAURRIE

Our District is committed to providing a safe environment for all staff and students.

To further our current safety measures, we will continue to train staff in mental health first aid.

Our collaborations with community partners address safety protocols district-wide.

We must all pledge to be vigilant and progressive in the arena of school safety. The most important message to share with all staff members and students is "if you see something, say something".

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

S.A.V.E.

- ▶ District-Wide School Safety Plans
 - ▶ COVID-19
 - ▶ Building-Level Emergency Response Plans
 - ▶ Code of Conduct
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DISTRICT-WIDE SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN

The Board of Education has adopted a comprehensive District-Wide School Safety Plan formulated and reviewed by a District-Wide School Safety Team appointed by the Board of Education.

Safety Team Includes representatives of

Teachers, administrators, parents, school safety personnel and other school personnel.

DISTRICT-WIDE SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN

This plan shall be reviewed by the District-Wide School Safety Team on at least an annual basis and updated as needed. The required annual review will be completed on or before July 1 of each year after its adoption by the Board of Education. A copy of the plan will be available in the District Clerk's Office at 630 66th Street, Niagara Falls, New York.

While linked to the District-Wide School Safety Plan, the Building-Level Emergency Response Plans shall be confidential and shall not be subject to disclosure under Article 6 of the Public Officers Law or any other provision of law in accordance with Education Law Section 2801-a.

PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

PROGRAM INITIATIVES: Prevention

Non-Violent Conflict Resolution Programs

Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is a philosophy based on a set of principles that guide the response to conflict and harm. The Niagara Falls City School District began the process of the 'Restorative Justice' practices beginning in the 2017/2018 school year.

Restorative justice's three main goals are:

- ▶ Accountability
- ▶ School Community Safety
- ▶ Competency development

PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

PROGRAM INITIATIVES: Intervention

- Youth Court

Youth Court is a voluntary alternative to traditional school discipline as a result of an acknowledged violation of the Code of Conduct.

- Peer Mediation Programs
- Extended Day and Other School Safety Programs
- Mental Health

The Niagara Falls City School District is in partnerships with the Niagara County Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, the Suicide Prevention Center – NY, University of Buffalo, and Niagara University in addressing components



PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

PROGRAM INITIATIVES: Post-Vention

Formal debriefing to develop an after-action report that evaluates results, identifies gaps or Shortfalls, and lessons learned; and discuss how the school procedures may be modified, if needed, and specify who has the responsibility for modifying the plan. Additionally, communication with liaisons of law enforcement agencies and judicial system.

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TRAINING, EXERCISES AND DRILLS

Areas Of Concentration

a. *School Violence Prevention Training*

Recognition of early warning signs of potentially violent behavior

Crisis intervention

Conflict resolution

b. *School Violence Intervention Training*

De-escalation techniques

Skills in managing disruptive individuals

Emergency response plans

Reporting of criminal incident

Building security

Management of student by-standers during student altercations

TRAINING, EXERCISES AND DRILLS

Policies and procedures for drills

Under the direction of the Superintendent, the Niagara Falls City School District conducts Mock School lockdown and/or on-site shelter drills in all of its buildings at various times throughout the school year. Schools are required to simulate an incident that would warrant a lockdown and/or on-site shelter and respond accordingly.

- ▶ The purpose of the lockdown, on-site shelter, evacuation and early dismissal drills is three fold:
 - ▶ *To provide a learning experience for staff and students in lockdown, seeking on-site safe areas and/or exiting a school facility in an orderly and safe manner.*
 - ▶ *To develop an appreciation and understanding of the need for a safety prevention method to protect all parties involved in an emergency situation.*
 - ▶ *To coordinate with local emergency services officials to improve the overall level of school emergency plans.*

TRAINING, EXERCISES AND DRILLS

School Safety personnel

School Resource Officers

- ▶ Certified police academy trained Niagara Falls Police Officers are assigned to Niagara Falls High School, Gaskill Preparatory School, LaSalle Preparatory School.

School Safety Officers

- ▶ School Safety Officers perform customized work involving the responsibility for assistance in a safety program for school personnel, students and school property. The work is performed under the direct supervision of a school principal.

Crisis Management Teams

- ▶ Crisis Management Teams are trained yearly and placed at each building site in the Niagara Falls City School District.

TRAINING, EXERCISES AND DRILLS

Early Detection of Potentially violent behaviors

School psychologists work in conjunction with parents, administrators, teachers and school counselors, social workers, deans in researching, identifying and disseminating information regarding potentially violent behaviors.

As mandated reporters, staff members have the authority to contact Child Protective Services (CPS) to hotline a student if further investigation is needed.

RESPONSE

Policies and Procedures for Contacting Local Law Enforcement Officials in the event of a Violent Incident

1. Chain of Command - The Chain of command has been established by the Niagara Falls City School District, starting with the Superintendent and flows down the levels of authority and responsibility of the Central Office staff. At the school level the building principal or his/her designee shall initiate the appropriate response action when there is a violent incident.
2. Sequential Response Action - A sequential response action is activated in the event of any violent incident. After verification has been made by school staff, notification to local law or fire enforcement agencies is made. Notification is done by telephone by dialing 911 or through an alarm system connected directly to the police department.
3. Information System - In the event of an emergency or impending emergency, the Superintendent/designee will notify all principals/designees of buildings within the District via telephone, District Radio Systems, telefax or Email, to take the appropriate action.

RESPONSE

Protective Actions

School Cancellation:

- ▶ See Niagara Falls Emergency Management Operations Plan
- ▶ Chain of Command
- ▶ Command Posts
- ▶ Delayed Start:
- ▶ Delayed start two hours from traditional start time
- ▶ Early Dismissal
- ▶ Emergency Response Actions

Evacuation

- ▶ See Niagara Falls City School District Emergency Management Operations Plan
- ▶ Emergency Response Actions

Sheltering

- ▶ See Niagara Falls City School District Emergency Management Operations Plan
- ▶ Emergency Response Actions

RECOVERY

Any school affected by a threatened or actual violent incident or other emergency will be required to have its Emergency Management Team and Crisis Intervention/Post Incident Response Team meet with the District-Wide Safety Coordinator to evaluate the response and recovery efforts and provide suggestions for modifications and/or improvements. A report of this meeting will be required to be presented to the Board of Education at a designated time and all team members will be invited to attend.

RESPONSE PROTOCOL PLAN FOR IMPLIED OR DIRECT THREATS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- ▶ Notify law enforcement officials by calling 911 in the event of an imminent emergency or contacting the Domestic Violence Unit of the Niagara Falls Police department at 286-4570;
- ▶ Determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is an abused or maltreated child and if so, report such abuse to the New York State Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-342-3720;
- ▶ Assess the need for medical attention and contact the school nurse;
- ▶ Contact parent/guardian or family member(s) where appropriate;
- ▶ Contact school counselor or School Social Worker
- ▶ Contact District-Wide Safety Director;
- ▶ Contact Central Office Superintendent or Designee

COVID 19

The NFCSD COVID-19 taskforce includes the Superintendent of Schools, administrators/supervisors from District departments, union representatives from all collaborating unions, and a representative of our construction management team. Also, parents, alumni, and transportation owners from the District's two contracted bus providers, as well as the Director of the Niagara County Department of Health. This COVID-19 Taskforce was established on March 9, 2020, and has been an intricate voice in the decision making throughout this uncertain time.

The NFCSD's medical director has established a practice that follows the recommendations from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the guidelines from the CDC. Each classroom/office will have a symptom of the coronavirus sign from the CDC posted with the phone extension to the school nurse's office for each building. The school administrator will notify each employee of the practice and placement of signage within the classroom.

COVID 19

All staff and students are asked to self-monitor and stay home if they answer affirmatively to any of the daily online survey questions, or if their temperature is above 100.0°F.

The NFCSD will adopt age-appropriate signs from the CDC, in common languages, for the instruction of hand and respiratory hygiene. The District website will also have videos to demonstrate proper handwashing and respiratory hygiene to inform staff, students, and family members.

All hallways and entranceways will have signs to remind persons of the six (6) feet social distancing guidelines, whenever possible. Markers will be placed six (6) feet apart in areas that will require a social distance line for entrance, food service, returning items, front desk reception areas, etc. If possible, all desks will be placed at least six (6) feet from door entranceways

BUILDING LEVEL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS

The Board of Education has adopted Building Level Emergency Management Plans formulated and reviewed by Building Level School Safety Teams appointed by the School Principal

Building Level Team Includes representatives of:

Students, teachers, administrators, parents, school safety personnel and other school personnel, community members, local law enforcement officials and emergency response agencies.

BUILDING LEVEL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS

Element	Building Level Responses
Policies and Procedures for the safe evacuation of students, employees and visitors and emergency notification to persons in a parental relationship to student	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of an All Hazards Approach• Consider the unique needs of each building-facilities, students, staff• Use technology for a broad, prompt notification
A chain of command consistent with the NIMS Incident Command Systems (ICS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The NIMS ICS Structure is incorporated into the plan• Requires coordination with community responders
Designation of emergency response and post incident response teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roles explained and assigned• Set evaluation criterion for the post-incident team
Coordination with the statewide plan for disaster mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To assure access to federal, state and local mental health resources in the event of a violent incident

BUILDING LEVEL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS

Element	Building Level Responses
Providing fire and law enforcement officials with information about the school and grounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Including blueprints, floorplans and serial images – in hardcopy and for remote access
Procedures for an annual review, drills and tabletop exercises with first responders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include local first responders in planning sessions, during drills and when updating the plan
Internal and external communications systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make the best of technology – besides telephone for robo calls and email blasts: district radio system, intercoms, local and regional media, district emergency alert system, district website, social media
Methods to secure any crime scenes on school property	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set protocol with law enforcement then communicate to team members

EMERGENCY RESPONSE CARD

LOCKDOWN - *There is an immediate and imminent threat to the school building population. Leaving your location is a significant risk.*

1. Immediately gather students from hallways into classroom/offices.
2. Lock all classroom/office doors immediately. Move all occupants away from windows/doors into remote corner(s).
3. DO NOT allow anyone to enter or leave the classroom/office once the door is closed and locked.
4. DO NOT cover door windows. Leave the window blinds and lights the way they are.
5. All activities cease.
6. Maintain silence and a calm environment.
7. DO NOT use or answer classroom telephone.
8. DO NOT respond to a fire alarm unless imminent signs of fire are observed.
9. Use district policy to perform accountability check.
10. Stand-by for additional instructions from administrative or law enforcement officials.
11. When all clear is given, resume normal activities as directed.

Options **HIDE** Remote corner of classroom
Bathroom

RUN If safe to do so
If entire class is able

FIGHT Last resort
Fire extinguisher, flag,
chair, desk

SHELTER IN PLACE / HOLD IN PLACE - *Building population is held in current location or moved to a single and/or multiple location in the school (depending on situation/hazard).*

1. Remain calm and maintain supervision of students.
2. Have all students/staff who are outside immediately return to the building.
3. Remain in current location or proceed to directed area in an orderly fashion.
4. Maintain silence. Do not allow anyone to leave the area.
5. Use district policy to perform accountability check if requested.
6. Stand-by for additional instructions from administration or law enforcement officials.

LOCKOUT - *A threat to safety or an incident that is occurring exists external to the building.*

1. Remain calm and maintain supervision of students.
2. Have all students/staff who are outside immediately return to the building.
3. Administrators/Custodians/Assigned Staff lock and secure all exterior doors, entrances, and windows.
4. Administration monitors main entrances and allows only AUTHORIZED personnel into building.
5. Internal activities will continue, as advised.
6. When all clear is given, resume normal activities as directed.

EVACUATION

1. Remain calm and maintain supervision of students.
2. After receiving word from the appropriate office, evacuate the building using fire emergency routes. Evacuate to a pre-determined or announced location.
3. Be sure to take attendance roster(s) for accountability check.
4. Stand-by for additional instructions from administrative or law enforcement officials.
5. When all clear is given, report back to classroom/office for accountability check.

If a bomb threat is received, the building administrator or designee will direct the staff as to which response procedure to follow based on the credibility of the threat. **REVISED 10/15**

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Niagara Falls City School District has a long-standing set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based on principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, cooperation, honesty and integrity. The intent of this Code of Conduct is to clearly define these expectations and to establish and promote standards for responsible behavior that will enable students, parents, teachers, administrators and community members to know what is acceptable behavior and ensure that deviations from these standards will be handled promptly and fairly.

It is the belief of the Niagara Falls City School District that respect both for individual rights and for the rights of the group is basic to sound discipline. Good discipline therefore must recognize the inherent dignity and rights of every human being and must be considered in terms of helping the learner change unacceptable behavior into acceptable conduct while emphasizing humanitarian principles and ideals such as justice and equality.

STUDENT APPEARANCE CODE

- ▶ Each Principal shall be responsible for informing students and their parents of the Student Appearance Code at the beginning of the school year and any revisions to the Appearance Code made during the school year.
- ▶ Students who violate the Student Appearance Code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item. Students who are unable to do so shall be retained until the end of the day or until a parent or designee brings an acceptable change of clothing to the school.
- ▶ Students who refuse to comply with the Student Appearance Code shall be subject to discipline up to and including independent study room for the day. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the appearance code shall be subject to further discipline, up to and including out of school suspension.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

- ▶ First Infraction – Immediate confiscation of the cellular telephone, wireless communication device, or any other electronic device from the student. Returned to identified owner by the main office and/or the dean’s office at the conclusion of the school day. Parent/guardian to be notified and informed regarding penalties for repeat offenses.
- ▶ Second Infraction-Immediate confiscation of the cellular telephone, wireless communication device, or any other electronic device. Parent/guardian to be notified and informed regarding penalty for repeated offense. Cellular telephone, wireless communication device, or any other electronic device returned to the parent/guardian of the student upon their request and retrieval.
- ▶ Third Infraction or repeated infractions- At the discretion of the administrator, student is subject to TOSH or a short-term suspension not to exceed five days. Cellular telephone, wireless communication device, or any other electronic device returned to the parent/guardian of the student upon their request and retrieval. Parent/guardian to again be notified and informed regarding penalty for repeat offense.

TRUANCY

Truancy is the unauthorized absence from, or tardiness to, school or assigned classes without the knowledge or approval of the parent or guardian, or if the absence or tardiness is contrary to Board attendance policies (i.e. baby-sitting or vacation on school days). If the student is under the age of sixteen (16) or turns sixteen (16) after July 1 of the school year, truancy is a violation of the Compulsory School Attendance Law. All students sixteen (16) years of age and over are subject to the attendance procedures and policies of the school they are attending.

Habitual violations by students over the age of sixteen (16) may result in the student being referred to a transition hearing for an alternative program. Any student under sixteen (16) found to be truant a third time during the same school year will be deemed a habitual truant, and at the request of the school principal, the school's attendance office or designated personnel will refer the student to the Family Court Intake Division for Supervision by filing a PINS petition (Person in Need of Supervision).

DASA

The Niagara Falls Board of Education prohibits harassment and discrimination against any student, whether by students or employees on school property or at a school function. This is in accordance of the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA).

- ▶ No student shall be subjected to harassment by employees or students on school property or at a school function; nor shall any student be subjected to discrimination based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex by students or school employees on school property or at a school function.
- ▶ Discrimination is the act of denying rights, benefits, justice, equitable treatment or access to facilities available to all others, to an individual or group of people because of the group, class or category to which the person belongs.
- ▶ Harassment is the creation of a hostile environment by conduct, with or without physical conduct and/or verbal threats, intimidation or abuse, of such a nature that: has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional and/or physical well-being reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety

SEXUAL HARASSMENT/MISCONDUCT

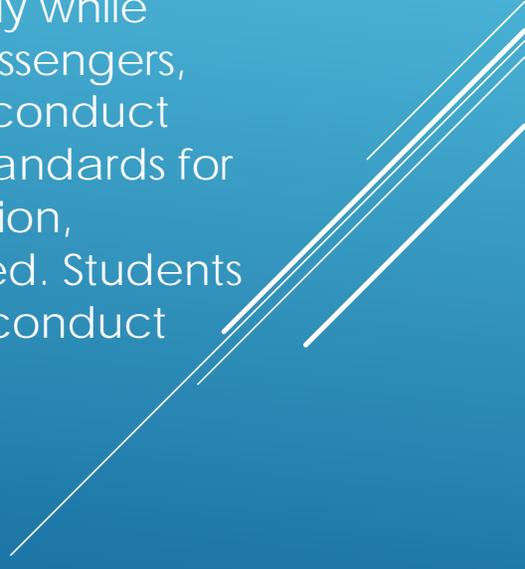
The Niagara Falls Board of Education is committed to safeguarding the right of all staff and students within the School District to an environment that is free from all forms of sexual harassment. Therefore, it condemns all unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Sexual Harassment

- a. For the purposes of this policy, unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, and other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, constitute prohibited sexual harassment if:
 - (1) Submission to the conduct is made either as an explicit or as implicit condition of employment, or as an award of grades or other measures of student achievement;
 - (2) Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for a decision affecting a student; or
 - (3) The conduct substantially interferes with any employee's or student's performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or school environment.

BUS CONDUCT

The Niagara Falls City School District will provide transportation for eligible bus students only. It is crucial for students to behave appropriately while riding on District buses to ensure their safety and that of other passengers, and to avoid distracting the bus driver. Students are required to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. Entering and exiting the bus without permission, excessive noise, pushing, shoving and fighting will not be tolerated. Students waiting for buses when not on school property are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the District's Code of Conduct.



ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

It is crucial for students to behave appropriately during academic activities. Examples of academic misconduct may include:

- a) Plagiarism
- b) Cheating
- c) Copying
- d) Altering records
- e) Assisting another student in any of the above actions

Violating Computer Acceptable Use Agreement and/or other misuse/abuse of computer privileges including the Laptop Distribution Policy.

BULLYING

The Niagara Falls Board of Education is committed to provide a school environment free of discrimination and harassment. Alleged incidents involving possible student bullying are to be reported to those in charge, such as teachers or administrators.

The Commissioner of Education has held that a school district can discipline a student for off-campus conduct that "adversely affects the educative process or endangers the health, safety or morals of students." A local law entitled "Prohibiting Cyberbullying in Niagara County" was enacted by the Niagara County Legislature to ban cyberbullying in Niagara County.

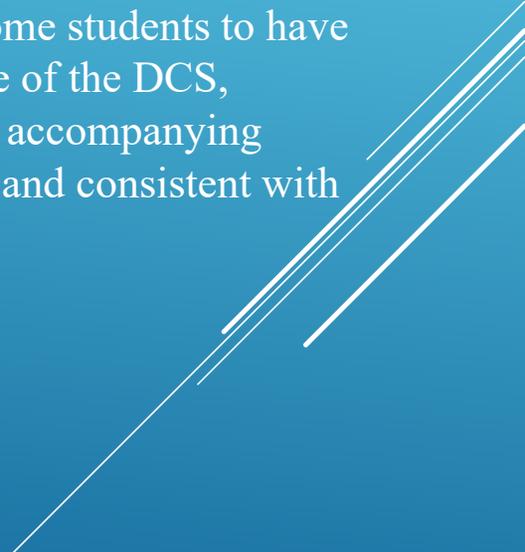
School officials can generally intervene/discipline if conduct/speech:

- ▶ Substantially or materially disrupts learning
- ▶ Interferes with the educational process or school discipline
- ▶ Utilizes school technology to harass
- ▶ Threatens other students or infringes on their civil rights

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

STUDENT USE OF COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION RESOURCES

The Board of Education will provide access to various computerized information resources through the District's computer system ("DCS" hereafter) consisting of software, hardware, computer networks, and electronic communications systems. This may include access to electronic mail, so-called "on-line services," and the "Internet." It may include the opportunity for some students to have independent access to the DCS from their home or other remote locations. All use of the DCS, including independent use off school premises, shall be subject to this policy and accompanying regulations. Further, all such use must be in support of education and/or research and consistent with the goals and purposes of the School District.

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DISCIPLINARY PENALTIES

It is the belief of the Niagara Falls City School District that discipline must emphasize humanitarian principles and ideals such as justice and equality.

It must recognize the inherent dignity and rights of every human being and must include self-direction and self-discipline. Good discipline is most effective when it deals directly with the problem at the time and place it occurs and in a way that students view as fair and impartial.

Therefore, it should always be considered in terms of helping the learner and not solely as punishment; of helping the learner change unacceptable behavior into acceptable conduct.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Restorative justice is a philosophy based on a set of principles that guide the response to conflict and harm. The Niagara Falls City School District is will begin the process of exploring 'Restorative Justice' practices beginning in the 2017/2018 school year.

Restorative justice's three main goals are:

Accountability: Restorative justice strategies provide opportunities for wrongdoers to be accountable to those they have harmed, and enable them to repair the harm they caused to the extent possible

School Community safety: Restorative justice recognizes the need to keep the school community safe through strategies that build relationships and empower the community to take responsibility for the well-being of its members.

Competency development: Restorative justice seeks to increase the pro-social skills of those who have harmed others, address underlying factors that lead youth to engage in delinquent behavior, and build on strengths in each young person

Youth Court:

Youth Court is a voluntary alternative to traditional school discipline as a result of an acknowledged violation of the Code of Conduct. The goal of Youth Court is to intervene in early anti-social, delinquent, and criminal behavior to reduce the incidence and prevent the escalation of such behavior. Youth Court strives to promote feelings of high self-esteem, a desire for self-improvement and to foster a healthy attitude toward rules and authority.

To view all District Plans and policies
please visit

<https://www.nfschools.net/Page/4996>

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THE END

